Thanks, Noah, for your message and for the below. Most helpful and timely as we identify and explore opportunities to enhance SG conservation on our lands. Let's please keep in touch on this, and related issues and opportunities. Regards. Matt

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From: Noah Matson [mailto:NMATSON@defenders.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 12:00 PM
To: matt_kales@fws.gov
Subject: Refuges and sage grouse

Hey Matt

Great talking with you yesterday. I'm sure none of these are new to you but here are our thoughts on sage grouse and refuges:
The National Wildlife Refuge System can actively contribute to sage-grouse conservation. These contributions should be comprehensively catalogued by the agency so they are taken into account by those deciding whether or not to list the species under the Endangered Species Act.

Additionally, we recommend that the USFWS take the following additional steps to enhance contributions by the National Wildlife Refuge System to sage-grouse conservation.

�	Identify sage-grouse production as an explicit goal of refuge management where habitat is available or can be restored/improved through active and passive management.

�	identify measurable habitat objectives and sage-grouse population targets for refuge units. These targets should be incorporated into CCPs along with a description of management activities that will promote the meeting of those targets.

�	Have refuges and Partners program work with the USDA NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative, state agencies and other partners to leverage public and private funding to support sage-grouse conservation on and surrounding refuge lands.

�	Direct those refuges currently without a CCP, where sage-grouse are present, to develop an interim species and habitat management plan

�	identify what steps will be taken to defend sage-grouse habitat against invasive species and catastrophic wildfire.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide input.

Noah